

PEACE NEWS

For War-Resistance and World-Community

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THREE PENCE

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND NEIGHBOURING SUBJECTS

THE rape of Czechoslovakia has a significance all its own. It is not merely the reminiscence of 1939 that has stirred the West to a new sense of urgency. Czechoslovakia was the first truly democratic country to be hauled inside the Russian orbit. Whereas Poland, Rumania, Hungary, etc., had never known what it means to be free, the liberal tradition of Bohemia and Moravia was, like that of Britain, a healthy native growth, whose seeds were sown by the Protestant Reformation.

If even such a country as this cannot resist the totalitarian virus, what hope is there for Italy or France, whose liberalism, being mainly secular in origin, has never taken root in every stratum of the populace, and

COMMENTARY

by

BRUCE ODSBUR

far more easily succumbs to Communist infection? The present quiet in these countries gives no cause for satisfaction. It is too like the lull before the storm. March has come in like a lion; it is unlikely to go out like a lamb.

Rut meanwhile we shall probably have to watch the Czechoslovakian pattern re-traced in the North of Europe. Stalin's ultimatum to Finland is the expected sequel to the appointment of General Savonenke—formerly Zhdanov's deputy on the Finnish Control Commission—as Russian Ambassador last month, and the adherence of the Finnish Communist Party to the Cominform.

Finland seems already to have been written off by the Western Powers: and no doubt, when the mixture is taken as before, there will not be lacking voices in The New Statesman and The New Republic to point out that this exemplary democracy was, like the Baltic States, after all only a fragment of the Russian Empire, forcibly wrested from the Soviets in 1918.

From the Turkish bath

A BLIMPISH reactionary myself, still hankering after an older mode of statesmanship and republicanism, I feel that the time has come for the Western Democracies, not merely to discard such new-fangled equipment as "grave disquiet" and "stiff notes of protest," but actually to reassume the antique armour of moral principle — breastplate of righteousness, helmet of truth and all. Judged by these principles, the encroachment of Soviet power are just as intolerable as the encroachments of Nazi power. They are only made more difficult either to damn or damnify the fact that they do not fit into the familiar categories of nationalism. They are not accomplished, or even accompanied, by an overt display of military might; the Quislings who seize power are not professedly anti-democratic.

Progressive Columnists

INDEED, for a long while past, British and American "progressive" opinion has allowed itself to be lulled, by the particular example of Czechoslovakia, into a wish-dream of Communism is not necessarily a bad thing; that Communist Parties are quite willing to operate within the bounds of a democratic constitution; that their first loyalty, even, is to the Soviet Fatherland. That dream has been effectively dis-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE SIX)

WHAT IS "AN EVIL THING?"

Young COs have their own answer

John Fletcher, the Quaker prison chaplain well-known to COs in three continents, received unwelcome publicity in the daily press last week, when described by a Magistrate of the Marylebone Court as "an evil thing."

MR. FLETCHER had appeared as witness for Philip Guard, a nineteen-year-old CO who had refused to obey an order to take up forestry, land or hospital work, on the ground that he could serve the community best in his present profession: he is considered one of the most promising actors of his age.

This was Guard's second appearance before the Court. On the first occasion the magistrate, Mr. Ivan Snell—a former officer in the Black Watch—had made a determined effort to influence him against his conscience, by pointing out that if an actor could demand exemption on grounds of vocation, so might a clown. He had given Guard a month to reconsider his position in the light of this *reductio ad absurdum*; and it was apparently the CO's imperviousness to Black Watch logic, only explicable by some sinister outside influence,

that provoked his statement to Mr. Fletcher:

"There are evil things in the world, and it strikes me that you can be numbered among them."

John Fletcher admitted to having given moral support to some thousand COs in his time. "I can understand how a boy is not able to withstand a forceful character," the magistrate told Guard. "You haven't got the stuff in you to withstand it."

Guard was, however, fined £20 for withstanding the forceful character of Mr. Snell.

John Fletcher was also witness for another nineteen-year-old, who appeared before the Fulham Local Tribunal the following day.

Bryan Smith had enjoyed flying while still at school, and joined the Army in July, 1946. Last March, however, he sent a statement to the commanding officer explaining why he could no longer continue his training. He was court-martialled and sentenced to three months in Durham Prison, followed by a month's non-military detention. Following a Tribunal in August, he was eventually released from the Army; but it was only last week, after a series of applications and examinations, that he was granted unconditional exemption. He is now unemployed by the National Peace Council.

At Fulham, Bryan Smith read the following statement:—

PoWs victims of unfair exchange rate

GERMAN PoWs are robbed of 12s. 6d. in every £ they have saved while working in this country when, on repatriation, their money is converted into German marks. Their money is changed at the special rate of 15 marks to the £, while English soldiers and other visitors to Germany receive 40 marks.

This scandalous treatment was the subject of vigorous protests from both Government and Opposition benches at Question-time in the Commons last week.

Mr. Skeffington-Lodge asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he would now reconsider the decision which means that the bulk of the men have been working in this country for next to nothing. "The continuance of the present arrangement," he argued, "is grossly unfair."

The unsatisfactory replies from Mr. McNeil, who answered for Mr. Bevin, brought several other MPs to their feet. Mr. Tom Driberg said that though conditions had improved in many ways for the prisoners, this was the one continuing grievance about which they felt a real injustice. He asked for a re-examination of the whole matter.

After Mr. Silverman, Mr. Bramall and Air-Commodore Harvey had also called for a review of the rate of exchange, Mr. McNeil promised that the matter would be looked into again. "I do not like to be dishonest by holding out great hopes," he said.

One prisoner, due for repatriation in April, told Peace News that he had saved £23.

Were he not a PoW this would be exchanged for 920 marks; he will receive only 345. "Not enough to buy a pound of coffee on the black market," was his wry comment. He returns home after four years to—no home. It was blitzed, just before his call-up at the age of 17, in 1944.

There is every reason for pressing for this matter to be righted now. Mr. McNeil's statement that "this is a diminishing problem" suffers from a wrong perspective.

The prisoners remaining to be repatriated include:

- (a) Many who were captured in 1945 at the age of 17 and see this as one more example of hypocritical democracy.
- (b) Most of the men who have worked in the sandy wastes of Egypt with few of the amenities enjoyed by their comrades in Britain.

Now is the time for one more protest to the Foreign Office on behalf of the PoWs. Will you make your voice heard? Remember it is still uncertain that the PoWs in the Middle East will all be home by next Christmas.

Conscription Demonstration by Czech Soldiers

THE Czech town of Pilsen, which boasts the honour of being the seat of the Skoda munition works and the Pilsen brewery, was recently the scene of a spontaneous demonstration against military and industrial conscription, reports the Prague correspondent of Worldover Press.

On Jan. 22 several dozen soldiers, both men and officers, gathered in the old city square to protest peaceably against the two-year's compulsory military service as well as the six months that soldiers must now work in the mines. Though entirely non-violent, the meeting was at once broken up by the authorities. The demonstrators and several people sympathising with them being arrested. All the soldiers involved will be tried for mutiny before a court-martial.

A similar demonstration took place a few days later in Prague in the city's busiest thoroughfare. All the participants were arrested.

This correspondents report was dispatched before the Communists came to power in Czechoslovakia. Writing just after the release of the news of the arrests, which was not made until February, he wrote:

"Pre-election fever is mounting in Czechoslovakia, the Communists are already playing on nationalistic sentiment and demanding capital punishment for those who instigated the demonstration. The National Socialist and People's Parties want to liberalise the Conscription laws, and abolish forced labour, but to many their stand seems too cautious."

Airmen showed cadet war's reality

"I first began to be troubled about war when, in the ATC in 1943-45, talks with airmen showed me there was another, side to flying besides bravery, and skill, and mastery of the air. My enthusiasm for flying was often coldly received by once enthusiastic flyers.

"Later, when I began to take a deeper interest in life, I began to appreciate their views and I felt that there were inconsistencies about war. I was increasingly uneasy when I was called up, but there appeared no alternative.

It was during a four months' interval whilst I was waiting to begin my training, that war first appeared to me as a matter of right or wrong, instead of a matter of necessity. I often found myself, at the end of a barrack-room discussion, declaring that war was totally wrong, and I found great difficulty in justifying my place in the Army. I became rather worried as I seemed to be going so definitely in support of an idea which I doubted, and I was glad of the chance, when I caught scarlet fever, to think over things without having to act in any way.

It was whilst I was recovering from this fever I was struck by a thought of what seemed a fuller meaning and purpose in life than the fight for survival and war.

I realised how helpless and meaningless we were as individuals, and yet how strong we were together. I felt that over-riding our difficulties and joining together was the real way to solve the problem, and I saw that it was not much value if we were only together in our smallest issues if we were not in agreement in our greatest issue.

Instead of the unpleasant fight for survival, life appeared more as a common effort to achieve the meaning and mastery of existence. I saw that any real peace and progress could only be achieved by exercising the elements of peace and progress in our lives individually and personally, and to all men, even if they were supposedly our enemies.

The reality of this understanding and its importance seemed so great to me that I determined to bring it into my life. The least I could do was to stop supporting the ideas I knew to be wrong and I thereupon wrote out a statement to my OC telling him that I could no longer serve in the Army. I shall not forget the friendship and understanding I received until my release six months later.

I cannot fully describe my experience in terms of politics, religion, or even pacifism, but in spite of the fact I realise the responsibility of such a decision, all that I have thought, heard and read on the subject since has left me with an even deeper conviction, that it is the road to follow. My hope for the future is to establish the ideas I believe are better than those I was brought to reject, as I do not believe there is a more valuable task than this to accomplish at the present time.

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Re-education

ELSEWHERE in this number a German member of the War Resisters' International gives her impressions of the "re-education" being carried on among prisoners-of-war at Wilton Park. After years of Hitlerian education, devoted to the glorification of war for the Pax Germanica, the Germans, she says, are badly in need of such services. And yet, the prospect of "re-education" fills them with alarm and suspicion.

Why is this? Can it be that the Germans are still not perfectly convinced of the disinterestedness of their Anglo-American philosopher-kings? Can they have noticed some apparent inconsistency between the fervent anti-militarism of The British Zone Review and the outlook of Military Government personnel elsewhere? Or do they suspect that the educational work of the Quakers in the USA does not meet with the same enthusiasm from General Clay as their work in the American Zone?

If any such doubts still lurk, they ought surely to have been set at rest by the appointment to the Presidency of Columbia University of the very man whose concern for a pacific Germany was so great that he sponsored the Morgenthau Plan—General Eisenhower himself.

Not that this appointment betokens any intention to "pastoralise" the USA too. Different situations after all, call for different approaches. But of the General's genuine horror of militarism his latest speech alone bears irrefutable witness.

Reporting on his work as Army Chief of Staff, last month, General Eisenhower emphasised eloquently that in the event of a third world war, the survivors, "victors and vanquished alike, will possess a wasted world in which civilised life, as we know it, cannot continue," and that "national preparedness was no guarantee against atomic devastation."

He went on to advocate a policy of peace at any price. The United States, he asserted, should not stop short even at the recruitment, by universal military training, of "a minimum ground force of 1,300,000 men" prepared at any moment "to strike an immediate retaliatory blow, and to destroy, if possible, the enemy's bases of attack and sources of armed power, to contain the enemy's main forces while organising strength to disorganise or heavily damage his main base, if that should be necessary for the attainment of peace."

The Germans' fear of re-education will not disappear over-night. We know only too well how strong such a resistance can be, having encountered it among our own countrymen. But this speech should surely go far to persuade them that the Military Governors of America, at any rate, are sincere in their championship of pacifism.

Possibly the kind of re-education promoted by the Quaker Neighbourhood Centres inspires more initial confidence, and is more efficacious in the long run (if only because "re-education" is derived ultimately from re-educare—"to feed again"). But Hilda Von Klenze is undoubtedly right: even such schemes as Wilton Park deserve all the encouragement we can give them.

We only wish that they could be expanded to take in Britain and America as well. If any such project is being considered, Peace News will give it its fullest co-operation.

Dr. CECIL GILL

disagrees with Dr. Alex Comfort and

Defends the B.M.A.

IN the case of Mr. Bevan versus the BMA we have a rare and striking example, in a drifting world, of a large and influential organisation opposing itself to the dictatorship of the State in a matter of conscience.

Let us get this point clear. The British Medical Association which, according to two leading Fabian socialist "sociologists," is one of the most democratic organisations of its kind in this country, is truly representative of the great majority of British doctors.

The suggestion put forward by some people that the profession has been stampeded by an emotional appeal of a BMA Council made up of a clique of aged Tory diehards is ridiculous.

Two choices

The doctors have two choices:

- (1) To throw in their hands, sell themselves to the State, accept dictation and direction by politicians and abandon their freedom in exchange for financial security.
- (2) To stand firm and risk loss and hardship and contumely in order to remain loyal to the old humane traditions of Medicine, of freedom and independence, and accepting the responsibilities of ownership and good craftsmanship to remain free to serve the best interests of their patients.

The dispute is not about remuneration but conditions of service. Readers of PN who have studied the doctors' case should be in no doubt as to the fundamental nature of their objection to the proposed National Health Service which the Government have precipitately planned and expect the doctors to staff and work without further to-do.

I then implore pacifists not to be led astray by Dr. Alex. Comfort's remarks about the BMA "attempting to work up opposition for wholly political and wholly discreditable reasons." This is not so much a "severe judgment" as a travesty of justice. He should, I think, have consulted his conscience before making such statements.

Many doctors consider the money side of the bargain at least fair and in some cases generous; but they

refuse to be bought and refuse to be daunted by the Minister's threat that those who refuse to sign on the dotted line will forfeit compensation.

The doctors have come to realise, what the lay mind still finds obscure, that payment by capitation fee and the private ownership of their practices are absolutely necessary to keep their independence and, with that, the freedom of action and power of initiative and personal responsibility which are essential for the making of a good doctor and a satisfied patient.

The National Health Service Act deals with medical practice, and medical practice is essentially a matter of personal relationship. The interference of the State between doctor and patient is a very delicate undertaking. The Government planners show no appreciation of human feelings, and the close and confidential and true friendly bonds between a patient and his doctor. The fault of overcentralised governmental machinery is that, of its nature, it ignores or overrides personality and personal relationships.

Obsessed with planning

The people who put themselves forward for election and whom we, willy nilly, send to Parliament are all obsessed with this idea of "planning." Having very little philosophy and less religion to guide them, they are at the mercy of doctrinaire opinions and their desire to capture popular applause now, during their brief parliamentary lifetime, leads them to act precipitately, rashly and often disastrously.

The acceptance by the doctors of the NHS Act in its present form would immediately put into the hands of the Government the means to pursue ruthlessly the whole programme of totalitarian control and

Pacifism and Ethics

IS there any sense in Mr. Hick's suggestion that a particular action (e.g., killing) can be both "immediately" right and "ultimately" wrong? Does it mean right in the circumstances at the time, but not right when viewed from a long-term perspective? If so, how does one discover the frontier of the short-term view, within which α is right, and the long-term view, beyond which α is wrong? If you cannot make such a distinction between immediate and ultimate, such right and wrong (which Mr. Hick would have dependent on these terms) must also "fade into" each other, with the result that the moral theory becomes relativist, so that Mr. Hick's vocationalism is no improvement on ethical relativism, but only an ambiguous re-statement of it.

May I suggest that those readers who were interested (as I, was) by Mr. Hick's article should read Kant's very short *Foundations to a Metaphysic of Ethics*, where they will find a terse refutation of the case Mr. Hick is trying to advocate.

MAURICE CRANSTON.

Oxford.

One moral law

MAY I point out that the commands of Christ are not, as is so often assumed, applicable only in an ideal world: they were given as the divine law and were to folk living in a world where evil was rampant, strong and aggressive; and the argument that it is justifiable and "immediately right" to wage war, i.e., to do evil, on a colossal scale, in an unideal world, finds no warrant in the New Testament.

Neither Christ, nor the first apostles, nor Gandhi, nor our non-violent Christian missionaries, in the presence of rampant evil, admit of two moral laws. To them the law of love to friend and foe, saint and evil-doer is one and unalterable—there is no such thing as an "ambivalent" morality.

REV. EDWIN FOLEY.

389 St. James Road,
Watford, Herts.

Rejected gift

THE ten leading humanitarian organisations (PN, Feb. 20) would do more by using all their considerable influence to bring about a change of policy, rather than aim merely at sending aid—a drop in the ocean.

The wholesale destruction of factories and equipment by the Allied Occupation is a main cause of the distress, and the immense programme of "demolitions" listed for the next two

LETTERS

years will aggravate vastly the need now prevailing.

That the hunger and misery is largely a matter of policy has been heavily underlined by the recent letter in the Manchester Guardian from Mrs. Charles Roden Buxton, in which she relates how the offer of 20,000 tons of fats for relief from the Swedish Government was rejected by the Control Authorities on the ground that, if it were accepted, the same amount of fats would have to be deducted from the rations, since the amount of fats to be received by the German people was allocated by the Food Board in Washington, and must not be interfered with by offers or gifts outside the Board's control.

In other words, the hunger rations are determined by high policy from the "top level" in the USA.

From the Rhineland I hear that no fats are being distributed at all.

This offer is far beyond anything that will be sent by all these humanitarian bodies put together. It is thus clear that, if by exerting their influence, policy could be changed for the better, they would do a hundred times more to render really effective aid than by sending relatively unimportant donations. In their appeal, they refer to the "effort" being made by the responsible authorities. It now appears that this "effort" consists

A PRESENT FOR POST

A FORTNIGHT ago I appealed for help to enable us to display latest PPU posters on the hoards in the larger towns. One letter I received has touched me deeply reads:

"Although I haven't a penny to give myself with, I received a little present on Friday, and then on Saturday, behold an appeal. I decided that I could not find better use for £2 10s. than to provide hundred posters for your hoards. Surely it can be managed by a few of us to send the number up to well over a thousand. Wishing you every success."

WILL YOU RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGE?

Posters are going up now in Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and Newcastle.

We have a plan for London, more about that later. Let us first all POSTER THE PROVINCES.

MAUD ROWNTREE

Contributions to headquarter fund: Feb. 20: £6 14s. 10d. Year's total to date: £25 9s. 3d.

Donations to the fund should be sent, marked "Headquarters Fund," to the Treasurer, Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh St., W.C.2.

repression of the individual, deny personal values and judgments, recognising only a "collective conscience" which is no conscience at all. Pacifism would not be tolerated as the contribution which pacifists have to make to the better ordering of the world would be driven underground.

Dr. Alex. Comfort complains that the BMA's opposition does not deal with the underlying causes of health such as militarism and capitalism, which latter he calls "the biggest public health problem of the day." Why not add the lust for pleasure and self-indulgence and factory system and irresponsibility generally? But these matters, which they interest, do not come within close and personal orbit of a doctor's life, and in this debate they are irrelevant.

By all means let the Government assist the building of a proper material environment in which bodies and souls of the people may flourish. The organisation of national health service should be part of this but it must be organic, growth, guided and gradual and not come by the blundering fiat of a dictator.

(at least in one case) in forbidding the importation of foods offered by friendly, humanitarian neighbours.

Everyone in Germany knows the wise-crack: "How long will it take Germany to recover? Ten years left to ourselves and fifty years with Allied aid!"

The humanitarians should remember this. It is much more than a joke.

M. BOOTH (Dr. Phil.)

Ennistymon,
Clare, Eire.

Not "either/or"

DIRECTION of labour is dangerous and unpleasant. Nevertheless, Mr. Pick's arguments against it fail to meet those put forward by Housman.

It is undeniable that essential industries are undermanned, and that if the economic structure of the country is not to collapse, something must be done about this. It doesn't help a bit to say that there are no sufficient measures to overcome the economic crisis, and that "under present conditions of national sovereignty crisis cannot be overcome." If wheels aren't kept moving some by the comparatively democratic Labour Government, then dictatorial methods are inevitable.

Surely the retention of PoWs, drives, travel bans, and the rest, prove that Socialist ideologies are at fault, so that the existing economic situation is nations willy-nilly towards totalitarianism. It is true that necessity is the tyrant's every move towards totalitarianism must be vigorously examined. And if society is to become degraded and enslaved, measures to increase personal responsibility (such as those Mr. Pick mentions) are essential. Mr. Pick's implied either/or: either scale planning or personal responsibility is a false one. It will have to be a both/and.

GEOFFREY CARNAL

Maddalen College
Oxford.

Greeks had a word for it

At least John Fletcher is in a company. Socrates, too, was a corrupter of youth.

MAX THOMAS

39 South Hill Park,
Hampstead, N.W.3.

A PAGE ABOUT RE-EDUCATION

A German woman looks at

WILTON PARK

by Hilda von Klenze

The centre at Wilton Park was originally set up for the re-education of German PoWs. Later, parties of German civilians were brought to this country by the Control Commission to share in the course of instruction in democratic government. These civilians are all people who are known not to have supported the Nazi Party, and are therefore eligible for government posts. Hilda von Klenze, who was included in one of these parties, is a member of the Aachen group of the German branch of the War Resisters' International and lived in Germany throughout the war.

WHEN the bus stopped, we became aware of a large number of prisoners of war in chocolate-coloured battle dress. They looked at the first German women they had seen for some years. After our two days' journey from Germany we can't have been a pleasant sight. We were tired and hungry and not a little touched and overwhelmed, and so our eyes and voices were somewhat uncertain at this first meeting.

In the course of six weeks we learned to know some of these 300 boys at Wilton Park by name and with most of them we talked and laughed and sometimes even quarrelled. We were happy to see how well cared for they looked and to hear how sensibly most of them talked about their own problems and ours.

AT OTHER CAMPS

Later on we were given permission to visit other camps in England. The prisoners there, we found, were suffering from the monotony of their lives. They felt homesick and weary and spoke bitterly about "the English."

I specially remember one very young boy with the eyes of a defiant child. We asked him how old he was, and he ungraciously answered "Twenty." He had been in prison for three years. We were thoughtful and a little sad on our way back to Wilton Park.

Meanwhile we were beginning to find out why our group of 58 German civilians, including ten women, had been sent to Wilton Park by the Control Commission for Germany. The English wanted to talk to us.

Now you might think that there must be a sufficient number of English people in the British zone to talk to as many Germans as they like. But that's different. It is not always easy to talk to a man who is Colonel or Major something or other and anyway your "boss." Some people feel that under those circumstances "anything they say might be used in evidence against them." At Wilton Park, however, no-one need fear that.

The tutors are mostly Germans themselves, and those who are not are keenly interested in what the Germans have to say. So they talked to us and we to them about German history and politics, economics and education, welfare and trade unions, and also about the Nuremberg trials and the crimes that have been committed in the name and under the eyes of the German people. And that, too, was as it should be.

NO NATIONAL PRIDE

Some of our party were terribly afraid of being "re-educated." Apparently it had something to do with what they called "national pride." Now I am afraid I am totally devoid of national pride, for nothing of the kind ever stirred inside me at the thought of re-education.

We very much stand in need of it, and as long as there are wars, atomic bombs, and the like the whole world does, for that matter.

At any rate there was really no question of re-education at Wilton Park as I saw it, rather of re-adjustment. Without trying to overlook the difference between a war and a game of chess, I should say it was like two chess players talking their game over move by move.

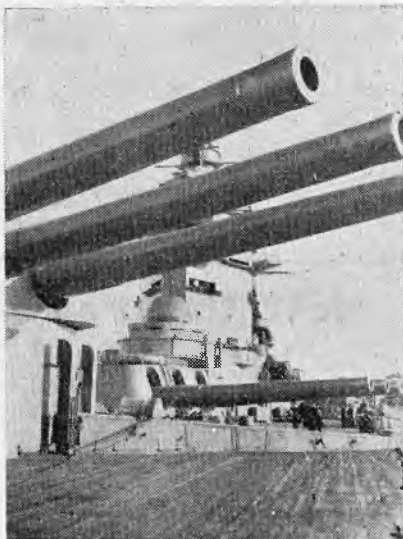
I must add something about the people I met outside Wilton Park. I experienced nothing but kindness, helpfulness, interest, tact, and consideration from the English and, I

am glad to say, from the Germans as well (national pride, after all?). I don't know which of the two had more reason to feel hostile and bitter towards us, but if they did they never showed the slightest sign of it. It was one of the strangest experiences of my life to be so kindly received on all sides, for it gave me a sensation of joy and shame oddly mixed and more than once brought tears to my eyes. It is very hard to express the thanks that come from the very core of one's heart, and though I have tried with all my might I know I have failed miserably.

IMPRESSIONS OF ENGLAND

Very often since my return to Germany I have been asked by German and English people alike what my impressions of England and the English were. It is hard to answer that in a few words. Impressions after all are mostly based on comparison. My chief was that the English, compared with ourselves, are entirely unbroken by the terrible time we have all gone through. Maybe those of you who have been to Germany since the end of the war will know what I mean and will understand that I registered this impression with a feeling of envy. Not that I grudge the English their "wholeness," but the rupture that is evident in the soul and spirit of most Germans nowadays seems to me much more serious and much harder to overcome than ruins, hunger, and misery.

Another impression was that of the prevailing goodwill of the English people towards the Germans. It made me glad and has never ceased being a source of hope and confidence, the feelings we lack most and need most in Germany as elsewhere and out of which will grow peace and understanding among the nations of the world.



THE ACCUSING FINGER

Guns — or a home for me?

While we commend the United Nations Aid for Children Fund to our readers, we must emphasise the chief cause of their misery.

Today nineteen million men are under arms throughout the world and more millions are making weapons of destruction. No labour or materials can be found to provide a home or more pleasant outlook for the child in the photo below. She shares two rooms in a rubble-surrounded cellar in Dusseldorf with one other child and three adults.

(Photo: Carl Stachelscheid)



NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES

by ELMORE M. McKEE

who returned recently to the USA from nine months' service in Germany as Senior Representative of the American Friends Service Committee. The Committee's services have reached Germans in all four Zones and in Berlin.

"MOST Germans think mainly about coal and potatoes. Mitchellhof makes us think about something else." With these words a Berlin health official explained recently why she was so enthusiastic about our Berlin Centre.

Coal and potatoes, shoes and coats, personal gifts and bulk shipments of these material goods are desperately needed in Europe today. By March, it is estimated, food needs in Germany will be the greatest the country has ever known. But another need, just as great, lies in the realm of the spirit. There must be places where ideas and values can be exchanged and created, where significant human relationships and group experiences can be fostered. These last beyond the hunger of today, the cold of tonight.

IN DESTROYED CITIES

In an attempt to provide the opportunity for such experiences to emerge, neighbourhood centres are being developed in a few of the destroyed cities of Europe.

Housed in Swedish barracks, or, as in the case of Berlin, in a large residence amid the trees of Nikolassee, these centres are becoming the crux of organic neighbourhood life. Utilising self-help projects as starting points, various groups of each community gather to carry out a number of activities. Neighbours volunteer for service and accept permanent responsibility for the centre's work.

Each centre is equipped with workshops where shoes, clothing and furniture may be repaired. Sewing rooms hum with activity as long as thread and needles are available.

The centre laundry is often the only spot in the community where soap and water can be found. Its library feeds the book-hungry. Day-care is provided for children of working mothers.

Young people's discussion groups, work-camp groups, midweek adult forums, parents' meetings, personal counselling interviews, daily meetings for worship are carried on in the various rooms.

In Berlin there is a warming room where 75 people at a time can sit and rest and warm themselves, chat and knit and listen to the radio.

"SECOND HOME"

In Frankfurt the heavily damaged workers' neighbourhood, Bockenheim, has given a great welcome to the centre on Rohmer Platz. Over the door are the words, "This is your second home; give it your best."

In Darmstadt, almost ruined by a 20-minute fire raid, the centre brings beauty and warmth to a stricken people as they sew, or study, or sing.

In Berlin all classes, including university students, are served. Amid the East-West tensions of this isolated capital, forces of faith, hope and goodwill gather in the young and the old. You will find them in summer lying out beneath the sun, playing volleyball, or drinking tea as they talk. You

will find them in public meetings discussing the black market, the Occupation, or the idea of God. You will find them cobbling, cooking, cutting-up stumps. And when the accordion sounds it is time for square dancing and for song.

These centres belong to the people they serve. The City Public Welfare Department Commissioner, Rudolf Pretzel, told Quaker workers: "When your group came to Frankfurt-Darmstadt you didn't preach or give orders; you started building and asked our help; and you showed you wanted to know us."

ESSENTIALLY GERMAN

This department found homes for the Quakers with German families, where they live as Germans, providing for their maintenance with CARE packages shared with their hosts.

For the first time Americans are living with and reaching Germans rather than existing in isolation in the American "island" of comfort provided by the military occupation.

The centres in the US Zone of Germany are operated by German boards of directors and departmental sub-committees, and by German staffs in which Quaker personnel takes its natural part. They are partly financed by German marks given by German city agencies, public charities and individuals. American funds supply barracks, equipment, food, and maintain Quaker personnel.

In each of the centres, neighbour helps neighbour. Breaking through whatever barriers—economic, political—social or religious—there may be, they are drawing people together. Few things are more hopeful in Germany today. German leaders of several other cities have requested centres. And Lt.-General Lucius D. Clay, Military Governor of the US Zone, has said of them, "Their value is great, as is their success. We need more of them."

WOMAN'S VIEWPOINT

IT may perhaps sound rather obvious to remark that "Pacifism begins at home" (or, better still, in the home), but is it quite so obvious just what is the best method of producing the desired end? Opinion is by no means unanimous; and opinion is in any case worth little unless backed by sound experience. Below is one reader's conclusion, arrived at the hard way in every sense of the word!

"It is my lot to live in a community where strong views of child welfare and upbringing exist, with many of which I disagree. For instance, quite a few parents believe a child ought to be allowed to grow and develop without any interference from anyone. The idea being, the personality and imagination requires unrestricted growth in its early life. Up to a point I agree, only I qualify the word 'unrestricted' to 'seemingly unrestricted.'

"No child of the ages 2-3-4 can reason logically, and to try to 'explain' a situation is absurd. I believe clear-cut rules that 'this is right and that is wrong, and you must do the right thing or take the consequences' is a far better way to deal with a young child than the attitude that 'you hurt Mummy when you behave like that.' Either the child develops into a 'tough,' or else becomes emotional; one is as bad as the other.

"To play on a child's emotions through his affections or loyalties is to me the highest form of mental cruelty.

"To have a code which can be flexible according to circumstances, but which unalterably brings its own reward or punishment, gives a child a strong moral starting point, and helps them to develop into responsible people, capable of facing up to any problem of life. Love them, yes! But don't smother them.

"Another thing which evokes wrath upon my head is the fact that I sent my children to a village school at the tender age of four. Hands were raised in horror at the thought of the darlings being at school seven hours a day. 'Too long for them, much too tiring,' they said. This despite the fact that the children ran about at home even longer, and through sheer boredom got into all sorts of trouble.

SPEAKING PERSONALLY—

"When there is a fairly large family, a home to run, and a husband coming in to all his meals, a mother has enough to cope with, and elder children are safer and better at school. There, they are sitting down part of their time, get a milk drink during mid-morning, and just the mild discipline they need.

"All this is very debatable, I know, but it is my own personal experience which I am passing on.

"I also have a horror of specialised tuition. I dread my children growing up with the idea that they are privileged people and, in consequence taking from life more than they put into it.

"One of the reasons I insisted upon my children going to the village school and taking their chance at a scholarship was the belief that if they were to go out into a competitive world, the sooner they learned to accept life as it was and take the knocks—and overcome them—the better. A hard doctrine, you say. Ah, but you should see my children!

ON SPARING THE ROD

"Another fallacy I would like to destroy is the one of corporal punishment. I believe from bitter experience that a timely smack on the bottom works infinitely more wonders than all the psychology, and quicker, too. Please do not get the idea that I advise beating—no, just a firm tap at the right time, on the right spot!

"Of course, all this boils down to the parent's own attitude to life. If we are to discharge our duty to our children properly, we, ourselves, must be disciplined, for if we dither and compromise, that becomes the accepted way for the children, too, and so the vicious circle goes on."

This has the ring of conviction; but it is possible other readers have happier experiences to relate. If so, their points of view will be equally welcome. It is never necessary to spare the pen!

EIRENE.



ERIC GILL

NEW U.S. PEACE EFFORT

Total peace in our time

A NEW kind of peace effort is being made in America by a layman, who, apparently despairing of Church leaders, proposes to go direct to the people of the Churches.

Mr. Zenas L. Potter is a one-time newspaper and advertising executive, with organising experience in two world wars. Recognising that both failed to accomplish their alleged objectives, and appalled by the prospect of a third and worse world war, he feels that the only institution able to bring moral force to bear upon the situation is the Christian Church.

He therefore presents it with a slogan "Total Peace—In Our Time." This could only be realised through total disarmament and the use of the money so saved for the rebuilding of the wrecked nations.

His message is available for others to use, though—curiously, for a newspaper man—he does not wish it to be given to the newspapers, but to be presented to the public by word of mouth.

"So apparently naive a proposal," writes the Rev. Edis Fairbairn, "would not have much chance to get anywhere unless it became the demand of a considerable majority. Then it would be up to the nation's leaders to implement it. Mr. Potter's idea is to start a kind of snowball or chain letter movement, with every group of persons who approve of the idea making themselves responsible for having five other groups listen to the same message."

Copies of his message can be had from Plymouth Congregational Church, 3805 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, Cal. USA.

GANDHI'S DEATH A TREMENDOUS WARNING

— Say Doukhobors

APPEALING for unity through Gandhi's death, the Russian Doukhobors of British Columbia sent the following cable to Prime Minister Nehru of India:

"We Doukhobors understand that Gandhi's murder is not the guilt of one Godse, but all who relied for thousands of years on force, guns and the killing of righteous and noble souls.

"Gandhi's death is a tremendous warning to mankind; either it has to accept his ideals and his predecessors: Peter Lordly Verigin, Tolstoy, George Fox, Christ, Isaiah, Buddha, etc., or perish from atomic bombs. We share sympathy with others in Gandhi's death, but sympathy alone solves no problems; only full acceptance of Gandhi's principles will bring salvation to all.

"We call on all Gandhists, Doukhobors, Quakers, Tolstoyans, Molokans, Mennonites and all anti-militaristic groups. It is time to unite our forces and call on mankind to repent." (Worldover Press.)

Eric Gill's Witness for Pacifism

AS Middleton Murry has said in these pages of the newly-published *Letters of Eric Gill*, they combine with the *Autobiography* of 1940 to establish Gill's integrity. "The artist was the man." His was a vivid personality, directed by a frank, original, dynamic mind. He went beyond craftsmanship to develop his creative skill, and beyond socialism to discover the nature of socialism's raw material, which is man. Dead in 1940, in 1948 he is a still growing force.

In his Preface to the *Letters*, Mr. Walter Shewring claims that Gill's philosophy is proving to be "his most valuable contribution to the life of our time." Since pacifism was essential in the thought of Eric Gill, this might be reckoned as a compliment to the pacifist faith. Fortunately, it is impossible to accept this valuation as true.

Both the *Autobiography* and the *Letters* assert too many wild, and, indeed, absurd prejudices for their author to figure as a systematic thinker. Pacifism needs the assent of ordinary men, and Eric Gill's pacifism must be disentangled from his indiscriminate hatreds of "commercialism" and "industrialism" before it can be offered as a normal outcome of normal experience, and not something wayward and peculiar.

CRAFTSMAN

Disentanglement, happily, is easy. "Business," as Gill attacked it, may be anything from publishing poetry to making guns for sale to Jews and Arabs. Whatever it is, Gill lived away from it. From earning £75 in a year by the individual work of his hands, he continued as an independent sculptor, a one-man establishment, sustained by commissions. Big business was as remote from him as the tropics from an Eskimo.

From his free position and as a Catholic he could have concentrated his vigour against the idolatries of turnover, mechanised output, profitable markets, wage rates and all the rest.

Instead, he joined his workman-artist's socialism to the ancient hostility of the handicraftsman toward the mass-producing machine, and blurred the relatively good with the undoubtedly bad under one common curse. In the result, the reader, more familiar with the ways by which Britain is at present sustained, dismisses Gill on this side, however he values his experienced writing, whether on religion, home, art, sex or the Army.

SOLDIER

For Gill knew enough of the Army at first hand. In 1914-1918 he was no pacifist. He was in the "Home Guard" early in 1915, and went "drilling and shooting—a mixture of fun and boredom." A tribunal passed him as fit for garrison duty abroad, and the artist was cheerful about "a free trip to India." But his work procured exemption until September, 1918. Then, in the Army, he wrote, "Life is absolutely mechanical and brutal here." He was a motor driver, and very early in 1919 he added, "Motor driving is great sport but, like everything else in the Army (anyway, in the R.A.F.), it is made a punishment and every man a criminal." So he felt at the time, asking only for a reformed, a humanised Army.

PACIFIST

In 1940, a pacifist, and looking back upon his "willing immolation," he recalled other things—"the angers and blasphemies of the drill instructors, the filthy slang of the sergeant who gave us lectures on how to keep clean after going with prostitutes," the two would-be suicides, guarded by soldiers in the hospital ward. But in 1916 he wrote that he had "no conscientious objections, none whatever."

Twenty years later, in 1936, Gill is celebrating Armistice Day with a pacifist speech, out and out. He spoke

for Pax, and his speech became a Pax Pamphlet.

He would not say that no war was ever justified or that force was always wrong. It was modern war which had become bestial, demanding "things that no fellow should do." It had long passed the limits of what is "profitable, endurable or forgivable. Modern war is worse than any conceivable disease."

Gill, in 1936, had four years left before his death, and, in the letters war and conscientious objection to it increasingly figure. Thus, in May, 1940, he said in a letter to a newspaper, "a just war is not only that fought for a just cause but also by just means," and "the means em-

by PERCY REDFERN

ployed in modern warfare are such as to make participation undesirable or impossible, and as those means are rapidly becoming more and more inhuman and uncharitable such refusal becomes more and more urgent."

How did so complete a change come about? There is nothing to say. The nearest to a history is the statement in the chapter "Jerusalem" in the *Autobiography*. "I had not seen clearly, until I went to Palestine, the dirty materialism which inspired all modern militarism, nor the impossible ungodliness of modern mechanical war-making."

Gill's damnable word "modern" may be suspect. Could any atom-bomb inflict more cruelty in kind than was known in Europe from the harrying of Northumbria by the Conqueror to the desolation wrought by the Thirty Years War? More important is the fact that, before obliteration bombing began, Eric Gill saw war afresh, and in his soul he revolted.

DELIVERANCE FROM WAR

For if war is to be deserted, as we believe it must be, that deliverance will not result from argument. It will be by an instinctive movement, by a feeling of the heart spreading and becoming dominant, much as the feelings of the past against burning heretics, torturing the accused, enslaving negroes.

But how much must be suffered before the world so revolts, and is so entirely revolutionary?

Mr. Murry has quoted Eric Gill's expectation of a collapse of our "machine civilisation" before a wiser generation can begin again. But "machine slavery" aims to feed and clothe, however badly, while mechanised war is mechanical destruction. War is like cancer: it is special and terrible because of its constant spreading and enlargement. Whether civilisation falls or not, war must fall, if man is to live. And for war to collapse there must be many more individuals personally refusing it, at any cost, as a special stand against a special curse.

"Religion—the first thing necessary," Gill discovered; and after that he went far toward seeing that the necessary first impression of it was pacifism.

Support the Pacifist Challenge!

BRISTOL ATOMIC WEEK

Sat. 13th March, at 7.0 p.m.

MUSEUM LECTURE THEATRE
DR. KATHLEEN LONSDALE

"The Use and Abuse of
Atomic Energy"

Chairman: HERBERT G. TANNER

Sun. 21st March at 8.0 p.m.

LITTLE THEATRE, BRISTOL.
VERA BRITTAIN

"The Human Spirit versus
the Atom Bomb"

Chairman: CROFTON E. GANE.

Arranged by Friends, For and PPU.

MUSIC & DRAMA

A Twentieth Century Oratorio

Edited by
Roger Page

IT is harder for a composer in an atonal idiom to write convincingly for one voice alone than for several voices in concert. And where voices are used singly, the lower voice of either sex is less convincing than the higher, the bass being the least happy of all.

Concerted vocal writing in this manner, whether predominantly harmonic or polyphonic, can be most effective. With the single voice the absence of the familiar scheme of tonal relationships and progressions does seem to make the writing of significant, distinctive passages difficult.

The further disadvantage of the single bass or contralto voice over against the tenor or soprano derives from the darker colouring of the former two. If the "wrong" intervals of atonal music are to sound "right" they need to be presented with incisive, exact clarity, and that is what the lower voices can by their nature do less tellingly than the higher.

These contentions are prompted by a recent hearing of a full-length work employing twelve voices, seven of them having solo parts of importance, while the others sing mainly in chorus. There are also small instrumental forces; seven string players and a piano.

With this modest array the composer, jealousy, vengefulness, compassion, ardent love and mourning grief; and of journeyings through forests and across seas turbulent and calm. Highly evocative can his telling be, too. Purple passages in the text are purple in the music. A storm, a death, a dirge do stir one.

Nor are the less tense stretches flabby. One remains attentive without effort; and after a few pages of the score have shown that a richly inventive talent is at work one awaits with zest the musical realisation of each passage in the printed words.

All this, remember, is achieved in an atonal idiom, but the composer has so thoroughly digested the idiom that it has become his natural musical

speech, so that at the end of the work one's feeling is not so much: "How 'modern' that was!" as: "How apt, how satisfactory that was!"

What was this work, and who its composer? It was "Le Vin Herbé," an oratorio, published in 1943 by Frank Martin, a Genevese composer, born in 1890. Its text is drawn from certain episodes in Joseph Bédier's version of the legend of Tristan and Isolde. It was presented for the first time in England on Jan. 30, at Central Hall, Westminster, by the Morley College Concerts Society.

The rehearsing and conducting of the work had been entrusted to that accomplished musician, Walter Goehr. The performers were the Morley College String Ensemble (with Eric Harrison at the piano) and Chamber Choir, who played and sang with excellent assurance and clarity, and seven principal solo singers: Richard Lewis, Victoria Sladen, Robert Irwin, Kate Winter, Margaret McArthur, René Soames and George James.

The hall was half empty. No doubt many potential listeners were in the Albert Hall, hearing the Hallé play under Barbirolli. No doubt they had a good evening. Certainly we in the Central Hall did. An evening, as is the way with Morley College concerts, that set up a landmark to which one looks back with gratitude.

DICK HOLMES.

"Anna Karenina"

I WONDER which Leo Tolstoy would have felt more if he could have walked from his grave to the Leicester Square Theatre: disappointment in Vivien Leigh as Anna Karenina, or admiration of the display of modern film technique by Alexander Korda.

The hope that Vivien Leigh would complete the unfinished acting of Greta Garbo, who played the same part fifteen years ago, is completely disappointed. It is perhaps due not so much to the failure of Miss Leigh to realise the Anna of Tolstoy's novel, as it is to the failure of the Director in giving her an unsuitable part. The woman Tolstoy described is more mature; she is a woman who, in spite of her love for the Guards' Officer, Count Vronsky, still has not lost her love for her husband.

Tolstoy wanted more than only the description of an ordinary love affair. Anna Karenina should have expressed the duty of a woman to her husband, and at the same time the selfishness of Anna in starting another love affair, which not only ruined her husband's life, but the career of a Guards' Officer; finally bringing herself to the abyss of her own destruction.

This not unusual subject has now been screened for the second time, and again it is a disappointment for Tolstoy followers, who hoped to see more than the white scenery of Russian

snow. Alexander Korda's "Anna Karenina" tries over and over again to keep to the Tolstoy description; he even goes so far as to let Miss Leigh repeat pages from the book when she is waiting for the train to St. Petersburg. Count Vronsky (Kieron Moore) acts like someone who is not aware of the part which the real Count Vronsky played in Tolstoy's novel. However, Ralph Richardson's role, as Count Karenin, combined with the mass scenes, such as the ball in St. Petersburg, makes the film well worth seeing.

GERD TREUHAFT.

"The World is Rich"

PAUL ROTH'S new documentary film on the world food situation is a grim reminder that in this problem lies the threat and challenge to future peace. "It is hard to be good when you're hungry" is one of the closing lines in Arthur Calder-Marshall's fine dialogue, and that is the moral of the film.

Roth uses dialogue less than in *World of Plenty*, and I found the technique, so lacking in continuity, rather disturbing. But the total effect is formidable; the film spares us nothing, and is shocking in its grimness. It is a film to be seen not so much by you, enlightened reader, as by the food-queue chatterer and the newspaper-natterer who are convinced that the British people are starving.

I note this irony: The film not only asserts that the next war, if it comes, will spring from hunger, but also that the 1939 war was the outcome of mistreatment and hunger of the Germans after the Great War. This film is produced by the Central Office of Information, peace-time continuation of MoI. Why did not the Ministry of Information say this during the war?

Watch for the film; ask your local cinema manager to book it.

ROGER PAGE.

A new venture

From *The Friend* we reproduce, by permission, this note by Q.Q.:

The four plays given by the children of Honor Oak Estate on Feb. 5 at Conway Hall demonstrated both how to run a Children's Theatre and how not to. The Gang Pulls Through, written by one of the children, was a lively effort which did not cramp the children's spontaneity. But one felt strongly during the final play—a mock-radio version of Hermann Hagedorn's *The Bomb that Fell on America*—that the children were inexperienced jockeys on adult hobby-horses. No under-14 thinks with the sophisticated ideas of Hagedorn. Ideologists should be careful not to exploit children's natural sense of drama in order to put across their intellectual gymnastics.

The Ram Gopal Ballet (reviewed here on Dec. 19) today begins a further short season, with new dances, at the Saville Theatre.

"Oh, what a fall..." From the London Theatres list: Kilburn Empire: Shaw's "Man and Superman." Next week: "Just William."

"Time to press for repeal of Act"

—LORD FARRINGTON

WITH only three dissentients, over 150 delegates at the London Conscription Conference passed a resolution declaring that the "introduction of peace-time military conscription is morally indefensible, economically disastrous and militarily irrelevant," recorded "determined opposition to the implementation of the National Service Act" and called upon the Government "to cancel military conscription by repealing the Act before its provisions become operative on Jan. 1, 1949."

THE conference, held at Dennison House on Feb. 21, was opened by the Chairman, Lord Farrington (President of the No Conscription Council).

In welcoming the delegates and visitors he said that the conference was meeting at an auspicious moment for the cause they represented. The Government's White Paper on Defence conceded many of their arguments. Now was the time when they should press and go on pressing for the repeal of the conscription legislation—"we may well win the day if we do so," he concluded.

THE MOTHER

Mrs. Cecily Cook, Secretary, Womens' Co-operative Guild, who was the first speaker, said that she represented the ordinary mother and the working-class housewife who were concerned in creating home conditions for the making of better citizens. War and military conscription undermined this work, and destroyed the moral values inculcated in the home, and the general family well-being.

"We must," she declared, "protest continually and continuously against this imposition of conscription that accepts war as a means of settling differences between nations and fight to have the Conscription Act repealed."

THE CLERGYMAN

A vigorous indictment of conscription as a violation of personal freedom was made by Dr. A. D. Belden, who said he was "shocked at the scant attention given by the Free Churches to the encroachment upon personal liberty occasioned by conscription," and he warned the conference that to yield to conscription may be to doom the world to atomic destruction.

THE M.P.

Victor Yates, MP, was confident that the tide was turning.

"Let us rise up in 1948," he challenged, "and demand freedom for the people of Britain and enter a path of peace and prosperity."

Among the organisations represented at the conference were the following: Labour Party, Liberal Party, Co-operative Party, Womens' Co-op. Guilds, FOR, PPU, ILP, Society of Friends, Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, National Union of Public Employees, National Amalgamated Union of Life Assurance Workers, Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen, Womens' International League, UNA, Woodcraft Folk and the British Federation of Young Co-operators.

MOCK TRIAL

MINNIE PALLISTER will answer to the charge that she breaks her pledge of pacifism by remaining a member of the Labour Party. Prosecuting counsel, Stuart Morris. Defending counsel, Tom Lovatt. Judge, Dennis Davis.

SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 3 p.m.
LONDON AREA AGM
ALLIANCE HALL, WESTMINSTER.

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We reserve the right to hold over advertisements and to limit the frequency of continuing advertisements.

MEETINGS, &c.

EPSOM. PPU Surrey Area mtg. Sandown Lodge, Worplesdon, Sat. March 13, 3.30 p.m. Stuart Morris. LONDON, W.C.1. 8 Endsleigh Gdns. Discussion lectures every Sun. 7.30 p.m. March 7: "The Last Owen," Bert Smith. March 14: "Anarchism and the Left," Tony Gibson (postponed from Feb. 29). Central London Anarchist Group.

ACCOMMODATION

UNFURN. ROOM reqd. for a man out all day. Clapham South, Brixton, Streatham, or Norbury. Highest refs. Box 864.

UNFURN. ROOM wanted in London with light and heat. Box 861.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

HOLIDAY EXCHANGE. 2 B-rmd. London flat for hse. or Caravan nr. sea (sandy-beach), 2-6 weeks in summer, family of four. Box 863.

SEASIDE HOLIDAY acmdn. for Vegetarians at Innisfree, St. Mary's Bay, Ashford, Kent.

LAKE DISTRICT. "Beck Allans" and "Rothay Bank," Grasmere. Attractive Guest Houses for strenuous or restful holidays. First class vegetarian diet. Dormitory accommodation at special rates. Enquiries to: Isabel James at Beck Allans. Tel.: Grasmere 129.

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COMFORTABLE HOLIDAY acmdn., easy reach sea and country. Terms moderate. Mrs. Bath, St. Margaret's Greenfield Rd., Poole, Dorset.

CORNWALL. JOAN and Herbert Lomax (late of Manchester) announce Easter opening of Atlantic Guest House, Summerleaze Crescent, Bude. Vegetarians and others welcomed. Every comfort.

BEACONWOOD HOTEL, Minehead, Som., Tel. 32. Beautiful scenery. H. & C., gas fires and rings. Vegetarian meals only. 4-5 gns. Tyrwhitt.

FOR SALE & WANTED

REBILIX MUST buy typewriters. We arrange advertisements and pay good commissions to any contacts in provinces who will forward replies. Full details from Rebilix Typewriter Co. Ltd., 561 London Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

LILLIPUT FARM, 120 strong toys, £3, worth double. Mrs. Baguley, Pensilva Cornwall.

EASTER CARDS to cheer your PoW and German friends and help create a spirit of new hope. Charming 3 colour design with English and German, or English only, quotation and Easter Greetings. 5s. doz. inc. envelopes (postage 3d.). Sample card 6d. Trade terms and discounts for quantities. Endsleigh Cards (P.N. Ltd.), 3 Blackstock Rd., London, N.4.

GANDHI PORTRAIT, reproduction or art board (approx. 9 1/2 in. x 8 1/2 in.) of new photograph used in Gandhi Memorial Number of PN. 1s. 3d. each (postage 3d.), 6 for 6s. 6d. (postage 5d.), 12 for 12s. 6d. (postage 6d.), from Publications Dept. Peace News Ltd., London, N.4.

HUXLEY JONES Royal Academy clay model "Father, Forgive Them," reproduced on a postcard. Packets of one dozen for 1s. 9d. (postage 3d. extra) Sample 3d. post free. A graphic reminder of the human tragedy of war. From ENDSLEIGH CARDS (P.N. Ltd.), 3 Blackstock Rd., London, N.4.

LITERATURE, &c.

UNION WITH Western Germany—The only real hope of future peace. For details of this and other points of a new progressive policy write The Recovery Party, Dept. 6, 72 Victoria St., London, S.W.1.

"GRAPES FROM THORNS? Figs from Thistles? Peace from Armaments and Conscription?" Double-crown posters bearing these words 7d. post free from Friends Peace Committee, Friends House, Euston Rd., N.W.1.

QUAKERISM. Information and Literature respecting the Faith and Practice of the Religious Society of Friends, free on application to the Friends' Home Service Committee, Friends' House, Euston Rd., London.

BOOK SEARCHERS Ltd. Aldous Huxley's Perennial Philosophy (7s. post free) is amongst the excellent bargains in very good condition offered in our March list of second-hand books. Book Searchers Ltd., 81a Dawes Rd., Fulham, S.W.6.

BOOKS. SEND for list includes, A. Huxley, Eric Gill, D. H. Lawrence, Wyndham Lewis, G. B. Shaw, Hy. Williamson, Art Books, etc. Corvintus Bookshop, 5 Christ-mas Steps, Bristol, 1.

"VOYAGE TO BERBERA" (Sheep Press, 8s. 6d.). Supplies available at Housman's Bookshop, Shaftesbury Ave., W.1.

PERSONAL

TWO NURSES require coaching in German for two months. Nr. Kensington. Box 862.

SITUATIONS VACANT

Situations are available only to applicants accepted from the Control of Engagement Order, 1947, No. 2021.

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COMPETENT GARDENER for West Country vegetarian hotel. One keen on veg. standards and composting desirable. Acmdn.: standard pay. Man and wife considered. Box 865.

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BIRTHS

TO JOHN and Janet Wood. Ann Penelope, 23 February, Mansel Lacy, Herefordshire.

MISCELLANEOUS

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COMMENTARY CONTINUED

pelled. Democratic statesmanship henceforth must, at the peril of its life, act on the assumption that Communist Parties are Russia's Fifth Column.

This does not mean that Communists should be treated as "traitors" in the traditional sense, any more than Fascists should have been. The existence of Fifth Columns is merely one indication that the idolatry of nationalism is on the wane, which in itself is a very good thing. But it does mean that democratic statesmanship should be fully awake to this fact, and pit against the ideology of international Communism the ideology of an international democracy.

Anti-Comintern Pact

SOMETHING of this sort looks like happening. Everything points to the early conclusion of a military pact between the sixteen Marshall Plan States. Norway and Denmark, which experienced the Nazi occupation, are wavering in their neutrality; Sweden is no longer held back by fear of embarrassing Finland. Russia has made the Marshall Plan what she called it, one facet of the Truman Doctrine.

For The Observer's Washington correspondent leaves us in little doubt that the Western bloc will be guaranteed by America. Any further encroachment by Russia would then be regarded as a declaration of war. "The western armies would suffer initial reverses and loss of territories," he writes, but "these countries will be defended in spite of themselves, if necessary."

What that last sentence betokens we can imagine. But the point of this whole policy is that it is not democratic at all, but merely anti-Communist, just as the alliance which beat Germany was not democratic, but anti-Fascist. The new American overtures to Franco are entirely in keeping with all the rest. On no conceivable supposition could European democracy be saved by an American-Russian war.

If Europe became the international cockpit, its civilisation would perish completely. If, as is more probable, American strategists minimise the "initial reverses" the western armies would suffer; if the Russians swept across Trizonia, joined forces with the Communists in Italy and France and imposed a "friendly" Government upon Britain, before the United States had got into action: then the result would be an underground Resistance which, when the bombs on Russia had done their work, would emerge as a new kind of Fascism.

Two voids

IF it is democracy we want to defend, and not merely Communism we want to defeat, there is only one

possible policy for the western powers. They must stake their all upon filling the two voids into which Communism infiltrates: the void in the body and the void in the soul of their own citizens.

The void in the body is less important. It was not hunger that drew many Czechs into the Communist fold. It was the Communist record in the Resistance—the record of an organisation which not only proclaimed any means justified by the end, but lived up to its proclamation. The power of Communism in Czechoslovakia, as in France, is a living proof of the pacifist contention that you cannot fight despotism on its own level without becoming despotism yourself.

To forestall the attraction of Communism, therefore, it is necessary to proclaim, in equally forthright terms, that not any means is justified by the end: that tolerance and respect for the person rank higher than all partisan considerations. But this is simply the ethic of democracy itself. It is necessary, therefore, to proclaim democracy for what it is—the heir to western Christendom, the political consummation of two thousand years of struggle, on the part of Catholic and Protestant Christianity, to realise the meaning of history in the approximation of man's kingdom to God's.

Precept and practice

SUCH a proclamation, however, would mean nothing at all, as long as the democracies continued their preparations for war—which is, by definition, the use of any means. This policy therefore, would imply that the democracies scrapped their armaments altogether, and devoted their resources henceforth to the material betterment and moral education of their own peoples, regardless of what might befall.

They might be occupied just the same; but the examples of Norway and Denmark go to prove that the one kind of Resistance to totalitarianism that does not utterly corrupt a democracy is the resistance of unarmed men, refusing to co-operate with a Government in measures that conflict with their conscience. I am sanguine enough to believe that if this policy were adopted, the spectre of world-Communism would fade away, like the spectre which had hunted St. Wilfred, when at last he cast out fear and confronted it in the name of the Lord.

Test case?

THERE are, it appears, some who have not yet relinquished their hope that UNO may secure the world's peace. The British Weekly last week described Palestine as "a test-case for the United Nations as Manchuria was for the League."

This verdict can hardly be upheld. No Great Power is so vitally implicated in Palestine now as Japan was in Manchuria. The most the procedure at Lake Success can prove is the ability of the United Nations to stop a minor—though sufficiently brutal—conflict.

At present the auspices are not good. The News-Chronicle, however, last Friday carried an unconfirmed report that a new plan for partition was afoot. Attributed to Britain, this plan envisaged "the splitting up of the Arab part of Palestine among the neighbouring Arab States of Lebanon, Syria and Transjordan, which have contiguous frontiers with the Holy Land."

Such a solution has obvious possibilities. The Arab States would secure material benefits; the Jews, who now doubt their ability to defend themselves, let alone their agricultural economy, against the attacks of Arab guerrillas, would certainly eye it with favour. It is, in fact, precisely the plan which Mr. Hugh Schonfield proposed in Peace News last year.

If the Chronicle report is confirmed, there may, therefore, be hope after all for Palestine, and even for UNO—as the solvent of minor disputes.

SUMMER SCHOOLS AND CONFERENCE HOLIDAYS

An effort is being made to establish a permanent centre. A beautiful country house with unusual facilities is available in Worcestershire. Organisations and individuals interested write: Secretary, 56 Belsize Park, London, N.W.3.

ONLY TOO TRUE

Scene: Local Tribunal for Conscientious Objectors, Fulham Town Hall. Date: February 24, 1948.

C.O. "Christ said, 'Resist not evil.'"

MR. SWALES (member of Tribunal and former President of TUC), "Ah, but that was thousands of years ago. What would He be saying today?"

C.O. "Exactly the same as He said then."

MR. SWALES "Now that's purely a matter of opinion. Ninety per cent. of Christians think the very opposite."

Thirty Days' for Dundee C.O.

The Dundee CO, Henry Morris Robb, whose case was reported last week when he was ordered to be held in custody by the Sheriff, has now been sentenced to thirty days' imprisonment.

The Sheriff stated that after he had served his sentence Robb would be liable to be called up again for medical examination, the failure to submit to which had brought him before the court. If he again refused the court would have no option but to send him to prison again.

TEN YEARS AGO

From Peace News, Mar. 5, 1938.

To many of us, the present moment seems nearer to a new Dark Age than the lowest point of the (economic) depression.

With war reducing Spain and a large part of China to barbarism, with heavy rearmament programmes being carried out by the United States, England, France and Russia in response to the ever-rising tide of Fascism, it is not astonishing to find the hearts of all but the very young "failing them for fear."

—VERA BRITAIN.

The coming Moscow trial is likely to be the most sensational of them all, for it implicates some of the highest officials in the country, including one of the co-presidents of the Soviet Union and the late head of the GPU.

Whether the charges are true or not, these trials are a terrible indictment of the Government of Russia. A Government which extends its political spying to its own members can hardly be described as a democracy.

NEXT WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. Alex Wood
Geo. M. Ll. Davies
Dr. Kathleen Lonsdale

WESTERN AREA RALLY

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"BASIC PRESSURE" FOR DISARMAMENT

"IF pressure from the Country were great enough the Government would initiate the calling but this would need as many letters to MPs as they now receive about basic petrol."

Victor Yates, M.P., made this statement when he was speaking last week at the Coventry PPU's "No Atomic War, No Conscription" meeting.

Twenty organisations, including Trade Unions, Co-operative Guilds, Labour Party, Sections, WIL, FOR and Friends were represented by delegates who listened to and discussed with Victor Yates, M.P., and Minnie Pallister, these vital issues.

Alderman Briggs, the Chairman, stressed the tremendous potential power for good or evil of atomic energy, and said that he looked forward to the abolition of military conscription in order that youth could be used for constructive purposes.

Victor Yates, who had recently spent seven weeks in USA, said that the only real hope of World peace lay in Britain standing as a bridge between America and Russia. He pointed out that when we were introducing peace-time military conscription, Russia had just placed disarmament on the United Nations Agenda.

He expressed the hope that, due to public pressure, the Conscription Act would not operate.

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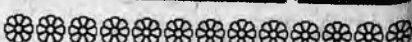
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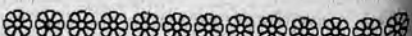
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